Amendment of Patent Law

2581. SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI NAVINCHANDRA MEHTA : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to meet all the guidelines as suggested by World Trade Organisation while amending the Patent Laws;

(b) if so, the likely impacts thereof on the pharmaceutical industry and the agriculture; and

(c) the steps being taken to protect the interests of home industry?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) to (c). As a signatory to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Agreement, India is obliged to fulfil its obligations. The WTO Agreement, inter-alia contains an agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) in respect of provisions concerning Intellecual Property Rights. Apart from the obligations which arose from January 1, 1995, India has time till January 1, 2000 to implement its obligations under the TRIPs Agreement and till January 1, 2005 to introduce product patents in the areas of technology not protected so far.

Prodution Centre

2582. SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government received any representation to revive the production centres at Ettumanoor Kottayam district Kerala;

(b) whether the Government are aware that the production centres are idle and employees don't have any specefic work; and

(c) whether the Government propose to revive the production centres?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Employees of the Centre are not idle. Employees of this Production Centre are allotted various duties as per the workload of production and training at the Centre. Presently, there is no demand for the activities for which the Institute was set up due to which the activities of the Production Centre, Ettumanoor are at low level. The employees are utilised for training purposes.

(c) There are various reports prepared by Officials of the Department which were not found practically acceptable. Presently, the Government has asked the Director of Industries, Kerala to study and suggest measures for improving the Centre. This report shall be examined and considered for acceptance and implementation if found satisfactory and keeping in line with the Government Policies.

Shortage of Jute

2583. SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether due to shortage of raw jute and technological obsolesence Jute industry particularly in West Bengal is facing acute crisis;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to meet this situation?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) Particularly on account of short crop and consequent mismatch between supply and demand, jute mills have been facing difficulties during 1995-96.

(b) and (c). The following steps have been taken for increasing production, productivity and quality of raw jute :

> More area coverage under high yielding varieties; accelerating production and availability of quality seeds; Emphasis on timely supply of critical inputs; propagation of improved crop production technology through demonstration programmes; encouraging row cropping through supply of multi row drills; creating additional retting facilities; organising training of farmers, etc.

World Bank Assistance for Development Projects

2584. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have sought assistance from the World Bank for implementation of various development schemes;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to set up such schemes in Assam; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Apart from the on-going Assam Rural Infrastructure and Agriculture Support Project with World Bank assistance which was signed on 6.6.95, there is no new scheme proposed to World Bank for assistance.

(c) Does not arise.

Agro Based Industries

2585. SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the States which have granted exemption from Land Ceiling Act to Agro based Industries;